

In the claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1 - 19 cancelled

1 20. (Currently Amended) A hand-held apparatus for writing optical indicia on a medium, the apparatus comprising:

a housing configured to be hand held while disconnected from the medium;
a central processing unit (CPU) for controlling the apparatus;
an interface for connecting the apparatus to external devices;
a light source connected to the housing for generating a light beam suited for writing the optical indicia on the medium; and
a scanning element connected to the housing under control of the CPU that directs the light beam at the medium in a pattern prescribed by the CPU

2 wherein the position and orientation of the light beam relative to the medium is dependent on the orientation in which the user holds the housing, which is disconnected from the medium.

2 21. (Original Claim) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the optical indicia comprises alphanumeric characters.

4 22. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the medium is thermal sensitive.

5 23. (Original Claim) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the light source is a laser.

3 24. (Original Claim) The apparatus of claim 23 wherein the light beam is a pulsed laser beam.

6 25. (Original Claim) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the scanning element comprises a scanning mirror.